

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Lee Cheng on 06/13/2008.

The application has been amended as follows:

The claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A foam sheet for a car interior member, said foam sheet comprising
a modified polyphenylene ether-based resin foam sheet having an open cell ratio of 60 to 85% as a whole, and
modified polyphenylene ether-based resin sheets integrally laminated on both faces of the modified polyphenylene ether-based resin foam sheet,
wherein the modified polyphenylene ether-based resin foam sheet comprises (1) a foamed layer and (2) pore portions formed in a single face of said foam sheet so as to be open in said face,
wherein the foam layer comprises an open cell layer having an open cell ratio of 70% or more,
wherein the ratio of the total opening area of the pore portions to the surface of the foam sheet is from 2 to 50%,

wherein the opening end area of the pore portions is from 0.2 to 40 mm², wherein the pore portions are (A) specifically shaped and have a depth to induce the vibration energy of sounds into the open cells of the open cell layer of the foam sheet, and (B) opened to the surfaces of the modified polyphenylene ether-based resin sheets,

wherein said modified polyphenylene ether-based resin sheets contain no foam cells, and

wherein the modified polyphenylene ether-based resin constituting the modified polyphenylene ether-based resin sheet has a glass transition temperature T_g 10 to 40°C lower than a glass transition temperature T_g of the modified polyphenylene ether-based resin constituting the modified polyphenylene ether-based resin foam sheet, and

~~wherein said foam sheet is used as a car interior member which is formed by thermal molding of said foam sheet.~~

18. (Currently Amended) A car interior member which is obtained by thermally-molding the foam sheet for a car interior member according to any one of claims 1, 4-6, 8,11-13 and 17.

19. (Currently Amended) The car interior member according to any one of claims 1, 4-6, 8,11-13 and 17, which is a car ceiling member.

Cancel claim 22.

Reasons for Allowance

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: Support for the negative limitation of "no foam cells" can be found in paragraph 45 of the

specification of the present invention. Note that Applicants' amendment and examiner's amendment are sufficient to overcome the art rejections and sufficient to place the instant claims in condition for allowance.

Of the references of record, the most pertinent are Vonken et al (US 5,618,853) and WO 02/227723. Naito et al (US 7,166,348) is an equivalent form of WO 02/227723. None of the prior art taken individually or in combination teach or suggest a foam sheet among other thing comprising the modified polyphenylene ether-based resin constituting the modified polyphenylene ether-based resin sheet has a glass transition temperature T_g 10 to 40°C lower than a glass transition temperature T_g of the modified polyphenylene ether-based resin constituting the modified polyphenylene ether-based resin foam sheet wherein the modified polyphenylene ether-based resin sheets contain no foam cells.

Note that, none of the cited art, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests a foam sheet with the recited structure set out in the claim. Accordingly, the instant claims are deemed allowable.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hai Vo whose telephone number is (571) 272-1485.

The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday, from 9:00 to 6:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Rena Dye can be reached on (571) 272-3186. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Hai Vo/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1794